EDUCATION IN ATHENS

History & Humanities

~ StandFor Projects

Teacher Notes

Arts & Languages	History & Humanities	Science
Baroque	Education in Athens	A-maize-ing corn
Cave paintings	Life in a medieval castle	Biofuels
Cinema: the seventh art	Napoleon Bonaparte	Cleaning up the oceans
Components of a comic book	Rise and fall of the Berlin Wall	How much water do you use a day?
Dance	Scribes in Ancient Egypt	How they communicate
Egyptian hieroglyphs	The *Belle Époque* and the Armed Peace	Hurricanes
From the stone to the Internet	The city of the gods	Nuclear contamination
How does a newsroom work?	The first universities	Petroleum
How to become cultured?	The Great Pyramid of Giza	Preventing droughts
National Library	The Macedonian Empire	Star maps
Renaissance Florence	The medieval table	The El Niño phenomenon
The cultural leap	Who are the major Greek gods and goddesses?	The legacy of an idea
		The origins of earthquakes
		The ozone layer
		The senses
		Uses of water

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#EXPLORING THE TOPIC

1 Read the title of the infographic. Then look at the following words and, in groups, discuss how you think they relate to ancient Athens. Take notes for each topic. Personal answer

a) men and women

b) slave workforce

c) democracy

d) economy

e) culture

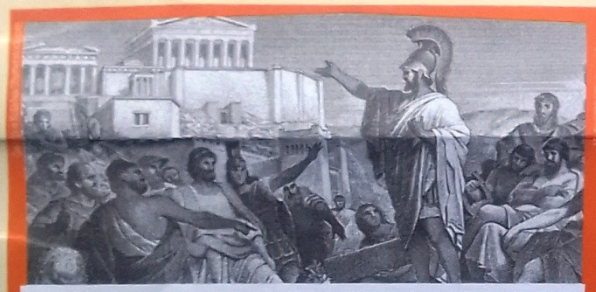
f) philosophy

K-W-L chart

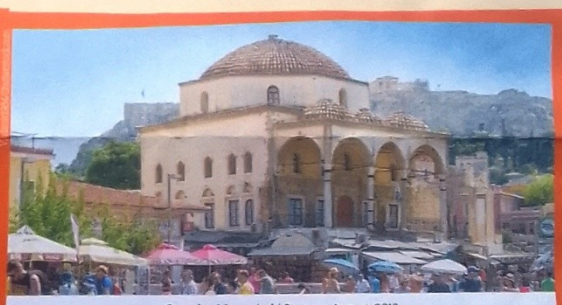
I *know* about this topic	I *want* to know	I *learned*

Encourage students to talk about what they know about Athens, especially in connection with these six topics. If necessary, ask a few questions, such as: Did men and women have the same rights in ancient Athens? Were there slaves back then? Do you know any Greek philosophers?, etc.

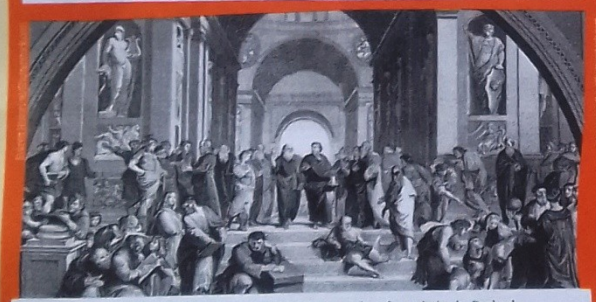
2 Look at these images of ancient and modern-day Athens. How can you compare and contrast them? Apart from the physical aspects of the city, in what other ways do you think Athens has changed? Personal answer



FOLTZ, Phillip. *Pericle's Funeral Oration*, 1852. Famous speech given after the Peloponnesian Wars (431-404 B.C.E.) as part of the annual public funeral for the dead soldiers.



Crowd at Monastiraki Square – August, 2015.



Socrates at the School of Athens, 400 B.C., engraving after painting by Raphael.

Protesters meet in front of the Greek Parliament in Athens – May 9, 2010.

3 The following words all appear in the infographic. Match each one to its corresponding definition. Find them in the text.

a) reach
b) flourish
c) due to
d) rearing
e) mandatory

(b) To develop well and quickly, and to be successful.
(e) Requested by law; obligatory.
(c) Caused by/because of (something).
(a) Related to development, to get to (a certain point or stage).
(d) The process of caring for the development of children so as they become proper members of society.

Education in Athens

Athens reached great economic power and cultural flourishing by the 5th century B.C.E., due to all the wealth generated by slavery, which allowed the development of educational practices and institutions. The world's first democratic system brought political hegemony, based on assemblies of the people – although only men born in the city were considered Athenian citizens, and their education was a matter of great importance. In this period, Philosophy was very prestigious, and great philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, would teach it in open spaces.

Paideia

The Athenians considered *Paideia* the ideal rearing and education of a citizen, and included schooling in literature, arts and physics. When boys were around 7 years old, they were schooled at their masters' homes, along with a pedagogue, a slave designated to accompany the boys. By the age of 12 to 14, boys had to take part in physical education and arts, until they became Ephebes, at 18, and started military, political and administrative training, for which the State was responsible. Only at 21 years old would they attain the status of citizens. Many young men would continue attending classes with sophists, or free masters of rhetoric, eloquence, and argumentation, which were important skills for those who wished to join the assemblies.

Athenian perfectionism

The educational system in Athens was considerably different from that in Sparta. While Spartans encouraged conformity and the importance of the State over one's personal interest, in Athens the focus was on personal growth.

FIRST STEPS

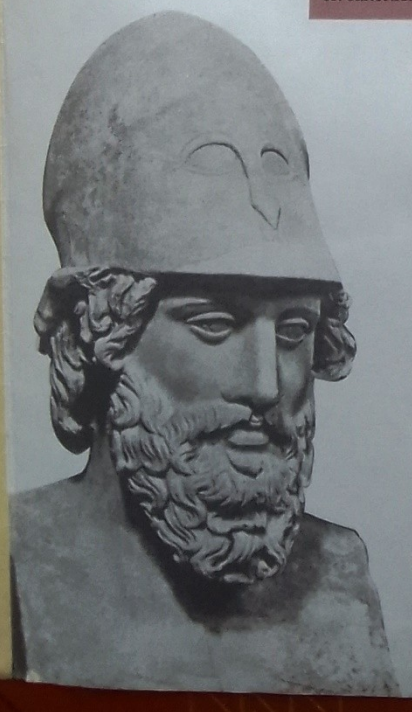
Boys learned to read and write in their early life at their master's home. They used small daggers for writing, and the content was based on canonical books.

MUSIC SCHOOL

Artistic skills were considered as important as physical or intellectual ones.

ARENAS

Physical education was mandatory after a period of studies, and it took place in open spaces called arenas.



The democrat

Pericles (495-429 B.C.E.) was a prominent Athenian statesman and general. He promoted many discussions on improving and developing society, and his efforts resulted in strengthened education and democracy in Athens.

Plato's Academy

Founded by Plato in 388 B.C.E., in a field containing a sacred grove of olive trees dedicated to Athena, the school was considered a "center of all knowledge."

1 Exclusive location

The Academy was placed in an open space. In the entrance, Plato wrote: "Let no one ignorant of geometry enter."

2 The master

Plato taught exclusively orally, through dialogues – a question and answer system – during long walks in the garden.

3 Students

Only citizens – Athenian men over 21 – could attend the Academy, and this level of education depended on their own free will.

Akademus

The word "academy" comes from Akademus, a mythological hero.

PHILOSOPHY SCHOOLS

These provided the initial idea of pedagogy as an independent and accepted field of knowledge. There were also schools for handicrafts, and free women were taught how to read and given basic Math at home. They did not attend schools.

GREAT MASTERS

In order to widen the range of knowledge, Plato often invited mathematicians, astronomers, doctors, and other wise men to take part in his classes.

The end of the Academy

In the VI century E.C., Emperor Justinian closed the school and prohibited any schooling in Greek Philosophy.

© Sol 90 images

#GUIDED READING

1. This is the time to reinforce the concepts of democracy, citizenship, and slavery in Athens, and contextualize the content in the infographic. Only free (not slave) males over 21 years of age who were children of Athenian parents and who had done at least two years of military service were considered citizens. It was an unequal and enslaving state, which went against the principles of the current notion of democracy. The introductory text refers to the cultural flourishing of the 5th century B.C.E., a period which became known as the "Age of Pericles" or the "Golden Age of Athens." Athens was then at its peak both in terms of wealth and slavery, which stemmed from the military subjugation of other city-states. From today's standpoint, it is contradictory that slave labor and democracy coexisted. Besides, exercising citizenship, although restricted to a few, and developing Philosophy schools for freemen, depended upon their being free from work, which was only possible due to the institution of slavery.

1 Start reading by the title and the introductory text. Note that the education system was designed to prepare citizens for their political life, because in Athens free men administered the city by taking decisions that resulted from public discussions, which took place in the assemblies. Think about the following questions:

- Political issues were dealt with in assemblies. Is this an example of a democratic state?
- In Athens in the 5th century B.C.E., who was excluded from the status of citizen?

Education in Athens

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2 Student life

The highlighted text block explains what it was like to be a student in ancient Athens. Compare and contrast the age at which school cycles were completed and the objectives of each school phase to what happens in modern-day schools in Brazil and abroad.

2. Call students' attention to the fact that school cycles in ancient Athens were quite similar to modern ones. Explain that young people in Athens spent a large part of their life being educated, as typically happens today, although more recently the emphasis has been on the world of work.

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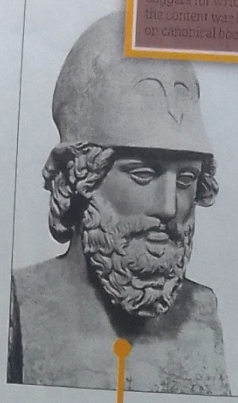
3 School curriculum

Some Athenian teaching mechanisms were employed in the establishment of universities in the Middle Ages, and still exist today, albeit with certain differences. Read the information on Athenian perfectionism and see which skills were the most valued and developed in Athenian education.

3. Discuss with students the importance of a broad curriculum, including knowledge from different areas, and emphasize the development of critical thinking and physical well-being. Explain that education in ancient Athens was designed to prepare citizens for the challenges of political life. This was because only those who were able to live a proper political life were considered able to live fully. That's why Philosophy was important: to help the development of critical thinking, oratory, and eloquence, which were the rhetorical skills needed in political life.



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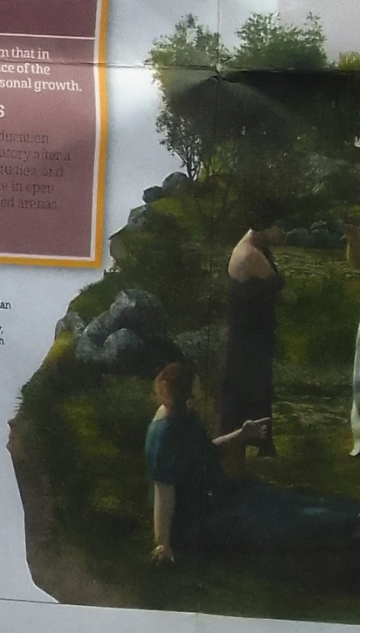

4 Statue of Pericles

Besides the main illustration, there is another image: a photo of the statue of Pericles. The years of Pericles' government in Athens (444-429 B.C.E.) were so important that they became known as the "Age of Pericles" or the "Golden Age of Athens."

4. Pericles improved the political system, and his main objective was that the largest possible number of Athenian citizens could profit from democracy, aiming at equality.

Plato's A

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in a field contain
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all knowledge."

Akademus

The word "acade
comes from Aka
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8 Plato

Plato was a disciple of Socrates and he used the Socratic method to help develop intellectual and philosophical thinking in his students. Besides reasoning and questioning, he sought to improve their rhetoric, which was essential for their ideas to be accepted and approved at the assemblies.

- Although being able to speak well and argue convincingly were fundamental to achieve political power in ancient Athens, do these skills have the same importance today?

8. The Socratic method uses simple questions to unveil the contradictions in a student's speech, which are often the result of an underlying social construct. As a result, students in ancient Athens had to question themselves, which in turn helped them develop their own thoughts. According to Socrates, people are born with knowledge, but forget it as they face social paradigms. It is by finding contradictions and paradigms that one recognizes their own ignorance and lays the basis for new and secure knowledge. Being aware of one's lack of knowledge is the first step towards learning. Although rhetoric is still important today, it competes with other means of expression and transfer of knowledge, such as the press, TV, the Internet, and advertising. Ask students to give examples of great communicators – on TV, social networks, blogs, and in public life in general – and note their means and techniques of persuasion.

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7 Incentive for the cultural and political development of citizens

Athens' place in history is based primarily on its cultural development. There was a fundamental political purpose behind this process, and this current flows through most of the texts in the infographic.

7. Let students note the existence of an education policy and its essential role in building a society. It might be interesting to discuss the issue of a utilitarian education in Brazil. Ask students if they think the educational system in Brazil is designed to prepare them to be active and critical citizens, or to make them ready to go to university and then get a good job.

6 The end of the Academy

The text in the subheading in the right-hand corner says that the end of the Academy would only take place centuries later.

Think about this question:

- Who benefited from the end of the free thought tradition?

6. The rise of Christianity discouraged empirical knowledge and built a foundation of divine revelation. Justinian's landmark decree in 529 closed the Academy in Athens and prohibited pagan teachings. At the end of the Roman Empire, the bond created between Church and State destroyed the free thought tradition. Christians switched from being persecuted to becoming implacable persecutors, and destroyed texts and works of art.

5 Main illustration

The main illustration represents what Plato's Academy was like and how classes were given. Note the people, the numbers related to the image, and the texts that accompany the picture.

Suggested activity

Divide students into groups and ask each one to come up with a school curriculum they consider suitable for their personal development. Encourage the groups to include skills they believe will enhance their development as citizens. Each group can then present their proposal while the other students assess the pros and cons of the argument. Highlight the importance of not selecting the best proposal, but rather that students explain what they consider adequate. It is essential that students understand that the school curriculum is supposed to achieve the developmental and cultural requirements for them. Stress that the school curriculum should meet current global and social demands.

#POST READING

1 Go back to **Activity 1** in the **Exploring the topic** section. What did you learn about the topics in relation to ancient Greece? Take notes for each one. Personal answer.

Men and women	
Slave workforce	
Economy	
Culture	
Philosophy	
Democracy	

2 Now compare and contrast each of the topics in the previous activity with how they relate to modern Brazilian society. Are there any similarities? Take notes and discuss in groups.

The idea here is for students to discuss how far we have come in terms of being a democratic society, if men and women exercise the rights in the same way, if they know about slave labor in Brazil, and if they can portray Brazil in terms of its current cultural and economic aspects. Ask them what they think about having Philosophy as an elective-only course in high school.

In Athens, making a living by working for others was perceived negatively. [...] Since most free citizens avoided wage labor as much as they could, slaves were used to fill the workforce gaps. As a result, slaves could perform a wide range of jobs [...] as cooks, craftsmen, maids, miners, nurses, porters, and even in the army [...] the most famous example being (surprisingly) the police in Athens, which, at least during part of the fifth and fourth centuries BC, consisted mostly of Scythian slaves.

From: <http://listverse.com/2016/09/29/10-fascinating-facts-about-slavery-in-ancient-greece/>. Accessed Apr. 19, 2017.

3 In **topic 7** in the **Guided reading** section, you learned that there was a political orientation behind the processes to encourage the cultural development of citizens in ancient Athens. Do you think there is any political orientation behind the common curriculum in Brazil? What does political orientation mean?

4 Democracy is referred to in the infographic. Read the following quotes about it. Then work in groups to create your own definition of democracy.

Democracy must be built through open societies that share information. When there is information, there is enlightenment. When there is debate, there are solutions. When there is no sharing of power, no rule of law, no accountability, there is abuse, corruption, subjugation and indignation.

Atifete Jahjaga

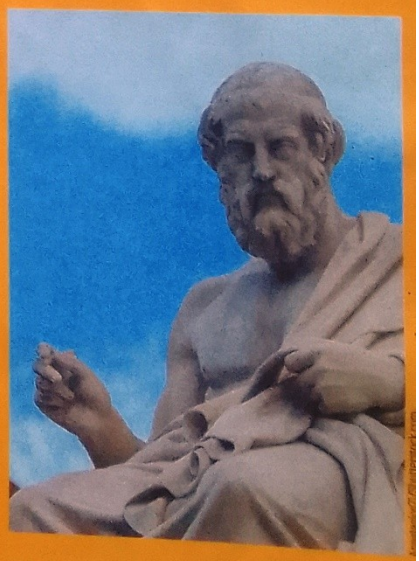
Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Reading and writing, like everything else, improve with practice. And, of course, if there are no young readers and writers, there will shortly be no older ones. Literacy will be dead, and democracy – which many believe goes hand in hand with it – will be dead as well.

Margaret Atwood

From: <www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/democracy.html>. Accessed Apr. 13, 2017.



3. Encourage discussion by asking students if they are aware of recent discussions on the basis of the national common curriculum, and help them see that in "political orientation" the term "political" has a lot to do with "economic."

#RESEARCH TIME

Education and democracy were the themes in the infographic you studied. In groups, research these themes for different periods in the history of Brazil, as shown below. Each group can research a specific period.

When there was slavery in Brazil

During the military dictatorship

At the time of the *Diretas Já* movement

When President Fernando Collor de Mello was impeached

When President Dilma Rousseff was impeached

Besides other aspects of your interest, focus on:

- the participation of men and women in society;
- the participation of youth;
- what education was like in Brazil at the time and who was allowed to take part in it;
- the means of communication available;
- what political and economic orientations were involved.

Project to-do list

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Project schedule

Who	
What	
When	

#IT'S YOUR TURN

Decide the best way to organize the material you collect in your research. Here are a few tips:

- print the most relevant texts;
- illustrate your work with photos, if possible;
- record any audio or video material you find with relevant information, such as interviews or testimonials;
- create a blog to post the results of your research – this could be done collectively as class work;
- invite any experts (if there are any available) to go to your school and talk about the subject of your research.

Finally, organize a debate on education and democracy over the years in Brazil. The following steps may be helpful:

1. Decide with your teacher when the debate will take place.
2. Think of an effective means to share the material you found in the research with your class (slide presentations, posters, printed material, etc.).
3. If there are any special guests who will participate in the debate, for example, any experts you invited, decide on the order they will speak.
4. Discuss with your teacher how you are going to evaluate the entire project – presentation and debate – keeping in mind how much you learned from it.